

REVIEW: STEPHEN PETRONIO 2014

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A Beautiful Machine, Flying Backward

Stephen Petronio Company's 30th Anniversary Season at The Joyce

By [QUINN BATSON](#)
Offoffoff.com



Photo by Quinn Batson

Melissa Toogood

Consistently nurturing a company and an aesthetic, Stephen Petronio has created a beautiful, organic machine that continually bears fruit. How perfect, then, that he chose a dancer from Merce Cunningham's company to put a point on the success of this model, for a new piece in this 30th anniversary season of the Stephen Petronio Company.

STEPHEN PETRONIO 2014

Choreography by: **Stephen Petronio**.
 Dancers: **Julian De Leon, Davalois Fearon, Josh D. Green, Gino Grenek, Barrington Hinds, Natalie Mackessy, Jaqlin Medlock, Nicholas Sciscione, Emily Stone, Joshua Tuason**
 Guest Artist: **Melissa Toogood**.
 Music by: **Michael Nyman (Attractors), Michael Volpe (Locomotor)**.
 Costumes by: **Ghost, Janine Antoni, Narciso Rodriguez**.
 Lighting design by: **Ken Tabachnick**.
 Production stage manager: **Meghan Rose Murphy**.
 Executive Director: **Laurie Uprichard**.

SCHEDULE

The Joyce
April 8-13, 2014

much of the dance. As a dancer, that can be exciting and disconcerting, adding both new skill and heightened danger of collisions.

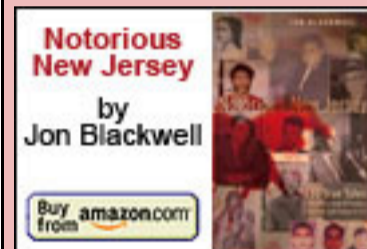
Petronio and Company pull this off well, with excellent help from music by Michael Volpe, which is soft and crunchy, sparse and

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- Hilary Easton: The

loud, all in good measure. Melissa Toogood, the former Merce Cunningham dancer, is superlative, somehow always managing huge extensions while dancing impossibly quick and soft. She looks completely at home in Petronio's movement in only her second appearance with the company. The other dancers travel mainly in pairs, often in unison, occasionally in push-pull interactions, with characteristic elastic spinning and sharp limb angles, and plenty of zap. Barrington Hinds and Nicholas Sciscione have a very Petronio duet, with the huge Hinds tossing a sizeable Sciscione around like a rag doll in half-intimate, half-violent interaction.



Davalois Fearon and Barrington Hinds

Photo by Quinn Batson

Hinds has found "it" in Petronio's movement after several years in the company, and he shows it in the opening solo of *Strange Attractors Part 1*, originally choreographed in 1999. Every Petronio dancer onstage this year has gone through this process as well. Some, like Jaqlin Medlock, seem to find and nail "it" almost immediately. It is sweet beauty to watch an old piece come fully alive with new dancers. The large and long people — all the men and Emily Stone — look ideally fluid in this version of *Attractors*, especially the remarkable Gino Grenek, who continually improves — 15 years into his career. It is quite possible he danced in the original performances of *Strange Attractors*. Spine-melting music by Michael Nyman haunts and propels, too.

And Stephen Petronio, finding it impossible to stay away from performing, also debuts *Stripped*, a solo limited by blindness. It is an odd piece, open to many interpretations: is the huge bird's-nest of neckties around his head, that is unraveled in a continuous string throughout the piece, a metaphor for stripping old things away to get to one's inner child? A commentary on the blinding effect of age? An inspiration to create, as he says his collaborations with artist Janine Antoni have become? The perception from the audience is watching a poor imitation of Stephen Petronio moving carefully around the stage (blind) for most of the time, and then seeing a too-short flash of the real Petronio as the last tie leaves his

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- **Katie Workum: Black Lakes**
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- **Katie Workum: Herkimer Diamonds**
- **Katy Orthwein and Aaron McGloin**
- **Keigwin+Company 2012**
- **kerPlunk and Friends**
- **Kidd Pivot: Dark Matters**
- **Kota Yamazaki: Rays of Space**
- **Kyle Abraham: Heartbreaks and Homies**
- **Larry Keigwin: Exit**
- **Lincoln Center Kenan Fellows**
- **Imno3:BANGS**
- **Lucy Guerin: Structure and Sadness**
- **Lucy Guerin: Untrained**
- **Magda and Chelsea: The Vulgar Early Works**
- **Mari Meade and Companies**
- **Mari Meade and Gierre Godley**
- **Mari Meade: Not My Home**
- **Mark Dendy: Labyrinth**
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- **martha clarke: angel reapers**
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- **The Median Movement: X**
- **Mei Yamanaka Works: Sunflower**
- **Merce Cunningham**
- **Miguel Gutierrez: And lose the name of action**
- **Mina Nishimura**
- **MokdessiWagner and Kawamura**
- **Nathan Trice: Recognizing Women Project**
- **Neta Dance: 2280 Pints!**
- **newsteps 2013**

head and he can move freely and well.

Thankfully the nurturing company model is working thoroughly in this 30th Anniversary Season of the Stephen Petronio Company, and the dancing, dancers and choreography are as fresh and vital as ever.

APRIL 20, 2014

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- Amour**
- **Patricia Noworol Dance: Circuits**
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- **Take Dance**
- **Take Root: Mei**
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- **Tere OConnor: Bleed**
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- **Valerie Green: Impermanent Landscape**
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